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CONGO NEWS LETTER

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Congo News Letter

THE INTERPRETER

B. W. Armstrong

IT is always an interesting experience to try to interpret a speech given in a language unknown to the hearers. The speaker has a message prepared which he hopes will reach the hearts of the hearers. He realises that he is dependent on the interpreter. The hearers have assembled to hear what the speaker has to say, but they in turn must depend on the third party in order to understand the message. During the past four months, it has been my responsibility to act as interpreter for our Home Secretary, and many and varied have been our experiences. At one station some of the hearers seemed especially interested. Asked later what they had thought of the talk, one replied enthusiastically, "That was a good talk, not at all tiresome. One man asked a question and the other answered, the first said some more, and the second kept answering, thus it went the whole time."

One thinks first of the public speeches interpreted, but there have been many other occasions when I have been the middle man. It is a real satisfaction to see a face that was puzzled and doubtful light up with understanding and confidence. The Congolese are inclined to be conservative and they like to wait and see what a person does before they put any great confidence in a new friend. Mr. Farnum came to us in the fine tradition established by Dr. Lerrigo and set forward by Mr. Albaugh. Often the Congolese would come to me and inquire as to this new white man who represents the Congo mission in the homeland. Their questions must be interpreted in turn to the Home Secretary; not just what they said, but questions which would draw forth the information they were seeking. I am certain that Mr. Farnum's first visit to Congo has been a success in establishing in the minds and hearts of our Congolese Christians the assurance that we are well represented in the councils of that great question mark, *Mputu*, or the white man's homeland.

If the Congolese give the impression that they are inclined to ask for more rather than to give thanks for what they have received, one has to take that also in the light of Congolese thinking. No right-minded Congolese would admit that he has already received as much as he needs or wants, therefore further asking is obviously more to the point than expressing thanks. Anyway, expressing thanks means admitting an obligation and that is always a good thing to avoid. So if the Home Secretary hears more about the needs than he does about the help already received, he can comfort himself with this incident. Once Dr. Lerrigo had listened to requests for help until he felt impelled to tell the story of the straw that broke the camel's back. The Congolese answer was that we have no camels and have to carry the loads ourselves, so whose back was it that got broken.

The trip around to the stations, the two regional conferences, and the closing field conference all in company with Mr. Farnum have given me an unusual opportunity to get acquainted with him and to speak for him to the folk of our mission. It has been a most happy experience. Certainly when it comes time for the Secretary to present Congo matters to the Home Board it will no longer be something taken from a letter from the field or an action by a group. He will know personally that of which he speaks.

If it concerns Boko, there will be visions of a most delightful natural shower bath under the small waterfall, less pleasant memories of the pitifully inadequate Bayaka group of church leaders, memories of the rather dangerous trip across the Kwango river in a crooked canoe, the vast unreached area and the one missionary family for all the work. If he is to speak on requests from Sona Bata, his thoughts will go to the impossibly large field for one missionary to cover, the eleven Roman Catholic mission stations in the one field, the rapid industrialization of the area, the fine group of old pastors who have been and still are the back bone of the church work, the muddy walk down a big hill and the reward of the view of Zongo falls, the medical school, and the power of a Christian medical witness throughout the area.

Banza Manteke has its problems along with much success in both school and church work. Trying to carry on the work of

four former mission stations is a pure headache, the lack of roads makes it a difficult field to itinerate, native village life is much interrupted by the developing commercial centers and industrial plants, the pressure for larger and higher schools is only a natural development of the policy of enlightenment we have carried on since the foundation of the mission. Our trip up the Congo river with a running commentary on early Congo history was most interesting. It was also of interest to speculate at times as to the chances of our boat to make headway against the current or to be swept back down river. The rapids are just swift enough to make it a question every time. The boat nearly always wins but Mr. Engwall told of a few times when it did not. We are happy to be among the did-make-its. Mr. Farnum took many pictures of that trip and it should make good human interest stories for mission talks at home.

The Union Training School at Kimpese is the best of its kind in Congo. The students give remarkable testimonies of the fellowship and fine spirit there. The class work is seriously done and the graduates are carrying the load of both church and school work on the stations of all three coöperating missions. We should now move on to a higher grade of training to meet the needs of our rapidly developing Congo. This will take place as soon as white staff can be assured. Before we arrived and after we left Kikongo, we heard many stories of lions, leopards, etc. but during our two visits there all was quiet on that front. The tales are not altogether without foundation because they did have both lion and leopard skins to show us, the beasts having been killed by the hunter in the workmen's village. But we saw other things too, baby clinics, the beginning of the new Bible School, a new shop, and a discouraged group of workers. On the way to Kikongo we drove through a large band of plains monkeys or baboons. One old male, trying to distract our attention from the females and the young, ran along for three hundred yards in front of the truck. We had a load of delegates from Boko for the regional conference and the excitement and expectations were great. They would have had a real feast if we had managed to run over the animal. But once the road was clear of others, the old male

also took to the high grass. His courage was foolhardy but to be commended at that.

Going from Vanga to Moanza, we had been asked over the interstation communication set to get the Moanza Ford pick-up at a trading post where it had been repaired and drive it in to Moanza. The road into Moanza is something to talk and write about, at least the first time. I took the Ford and Mr. Farnum was driving the new Moanza Chevrolet carry-all in which we had traveled from Léo. When we came to the bad part of the road, I warned him not to be too slow about shifting into low gear or he would find himself sliding backward down some of the hills. The grass is so tall that one cannot see another car any distance away, so Mr. Farnum was on his own. He did a fine job and commended himself to his Congo colleagues by arriving at Moanza with everything in good order. We were thrilled by a baptismal service at the foot of a small waterfall where 110 folk were symbolically raised to newness of life. The sunsets, the eclipse of the moon, the electrical displays during the storms, the sound church work, the developing school and medical work all at Moanza sent us away rejoicing. Vanga is in the midst of a revival and the number baptised is only limited by the numbers that the missionary can examine. Several thousands have been baptised the past two years and many more thousands await examination. We went to one of the Vanga churches for a Sunday visit. The missionary had already been there and examined the folk of which 460 had been accepted. We arrived there in the rain and it continued to rain all day. This did not dampen the enthusiasm nor prevent the baptismal service at a nearby stream. I am sure that neither of us will ever forget that mass of folk lining the banks of the stream, five pastors doing the baptising with a verse of a song between each group of five. This year we have had to leave Vanga without an evangelistic worker, and Dr. Osterholm with such help as the Wiseman twins can give will have to carry on. Surely this is shortsightedness on the part of our home constituency to leave the field so understaffed that an already overworked doctor will also have to assume responsibility for a church group of many thousands.

Following the visits to the stations we met for conference

here in Léopoldville. Serious questions were faced and answers given according to the light we have. More serious than any other thing is the shortage of missionaries. If it continues our whole program will have to be curtailed. The church is growing, schools are overcrowded and we are not able to care for even the children of our own church members. This might be less serious if it were not for the fact that schools out here are either Roman Catholic or Protestant. The Government expects to carry on its educational work through Christian missions. The Catholics are ready for an unlimited advance while we can barely meet the demands of today. We wish it were possible for the home constituency to grasp the fact that our children will go to school, either to ourselves or to the Catholics. We debated many questions concerned with school work at conference and are not satisfied but have to accept the results. Medical work is prospering and is helped along by the State. Our doctors and nurses are tops in their professions both as medical workers and as missionaries. The development of the new union hospital will provide a place where missionaries can be cared for other than in the home of the doctor or nurse.

Getting new buildings for the growing schools and hospitals and churches is a real problem. One has to have some money and also some one to supervise the work. We can get some help from the Government in medical and educational buildings but none in the church work. We would not accept such gifts in any case. But white supervision means that either we have builders as such or men appointed for other work have to leave it and look after the building work.

The devotional periods held both morning and evening were times of refreshment of heart and mind. Now the conference has closed, the cars for the Kwango area have gone, and we await the first messages over the communication sets telling of their safe arrival. Today Mr. Farnum left by plane for New York (June 29) and he will be there by the time the missionaries on the interior stations get to their homes. We live in a wonderful world.

Here at Léopoldville we had to exchange a family for a single girl. To prevent Moanza being without a family we moved the

Boones from Léo to Moanza and Phyllis Benner will come here.

Boones are busily packing and turning work over to Phyllis. The only other move involves Eva Shepard who will go from Moanza to Boko where she will become a pioneer among the Bayaka. More power to all three of them as they go to their new places of work.

Now my interpreting is over with for the time being and rereading this makes me think that I have been anticipating rather than interpreting. In any case all of us unite in one great effort to make Christ known and loved out here as well as in our homeland. We long to hear repeated the words from Hosea : "And we will say no more 'My God' to what our hands have made." We are happy that our Home Secretary came to us for a visit and we pray that he will interpret Congo to the home churches in such a way that all of you will be united with us to help make such a prayer a reality.

NOTES ON THE EVANGELISTIC AND EDUCATIONAL WORK IN CONGO

TAKEN FROM REPORTS GIVEN DURING 1950 CONFERENCE

The Evangelistic and Educational work in the district go hand in hand; so when one reads the reports of the educational work one would say, "why this is evangelistic work," and vice versa. *Sona Bata* says- During February and March thirteen village catechists were in at the station for a course of study in Bible and other subjects which would help them in their work. Visiting the churches in the Sona Bata district took the evangelistic missionary the major part of his time from February to the 11th of December. 745 Were baptized and 854 were restored to fellowship. Giving increased considerably during the year.

Our rural schools show evidence of decided improvement. The educational work on the station has continued to go forward, tho we still have an inadequate teaching staff. Each boy has his own garden and they have harvested beans, peanuts and corn. We have 185 boys living in our dormitories, and also 120 girls.

It has been increasingly evident that our church building was not adequate for the growing attendance on Sunday mornings; so in March we began having two services with a combined Sunday School period in between. The plan is not entirely satisfactory because our people like to worship together, and some day we hope to be able to enlarge the church, but in the meantime this is the best solution to a very pleasant difficulty.

* * *

Banza Manteke—The old church of Palabala is being awakened. Pastor Lukebuka is a live wire and on the job. 748 were baptized out in the district. The station church is helping the mission financially in building a teacher's house and helping in the construction of a school building. Our 14 regional schools have an enrollment of over 1300. We have raised the standard of these schools so that all the children will have an opportunity of finishing their primary education in their own village area.

Decision Day on the station was a glorious sight to see as about two hundred of our pupils came forward without any pressure except that of the Word of God and the Holy Spirit and the school environment and teaching. After a period of instruction 130 of these boys and girls were baptized in the beautiful pool at the girls' spring.

* * *

Léopoldville—The interest is good and people are coming. At the beginning of the school year we started a Primary church and a Junior church in order to seat all adults who attend. It gives the children a chance to hear messages that are prepared for their age groups.

Student prayer meetings are held Wednesday and Friday after school. The students show much interest in the meetings and

we feel that we have been raised to some spiritual heights in these days together.

There are still many, many "detached" church members here, but seldom a week goes by without at least one person coming to enter the followers' class. Our present membership is 443.

In addition to the work at Léopoldville we go each Sunday afternoon to a nearby village, Kinsuka, for a service. The work at Ngombe is also supervised.

* * *

Moanza—The number baptized this year is 1038, and giving increased from francs 98,000 to francs 130,757. Six of our self-supporting churches have undertaken the support of the remaining six poorer churches so that while it would not be entirely truthful to say that all the churches are self-supporting, yet it might be said that for over six months no mission funds have gone to the support of poorer churches. In checking our church members over a period of three years we find from 75% to 90% reported active, which was the cause of not a little encouragement and rejoicing.

One of our village catechists was asked to tell the other teachers how he maintained such a high interest in spiritual things among his Christian believers. He said, "You have to teach them every morning and every night, day in and day out, week in and week out, year in and year out." One of the teachers ventured the question which I myself would have asked : "What do you do when they don't come to services ?"

"Then you have to go after them," he replied, "and sit where they sit and minister to them there."

At Easter time the boys worked out a pageant which was presented once on the station, and twice in the district during the Easter holidays. At the three presentations many men and women, boys and girls openly witnessed their determination to take up their cross and follow the Christ who bore their sin in His body on the cross for them.

* * *

Kikongo—Gospel Teams from the Central School have carried on with gratifying results. The one handicap has been lack of Native leadership for the teams and the fact that so many of the villages lack teachers to follow up those who made decisions. This critical lack of village teacher-evangelists led to the calling in of some forty young men for a "Prep" school for teachers, which was conducted thru five months. Four of this number are now out to open new schools, serving three to five or six villages. Others went as helpers to the overloaded Regional school teachers; others went to individual villages. We have 7 Regional schools. At the post where local children attend the first-year class, we are insisting that one, at least, out of three be a girl. By insisting on young children in our village and regional schools, we hope to have more sturdy material from which to draw our future leaders. Our regional schools are rich fields for a program of child evangelism. At seven of our posts the pastor has been allowed francs 400 worth of books to sell. We are hoping that with the printed word we can reach many of our literate people with Christian literature. One of our big needs now is for interesting, inexpensive booklets for new literates and children.

Supervised study-hall five nights a week was inaugurated with fear and trembling, but has proved very successful. The students have to be forced to go home at night. Electric lights in all of the class-rooms have helped to make study-hall popular. This has also helped to cut down the number of "palavers" which are inevitable when boys and girls have idle evenings on their hands.

Individual gardens instead of group plantations for the students have proved quite successful and received the enthusiastic approbation of the Government Chief Agricultural Agent when he visited us. He has written urging that we consider the establishment of an accredited agricultural school at Kikongo.

The academic growth of the school takes second place to the joy we have had this year in the spiritual progress made by both students and teachers. Our hearts filled to overflowing with thanksgiving when a large percentage of the total enrollment pledged itself to yielded living for the Master. We are looking forward to the day when they will be ready to go out to work in the field

which is ripe unto harvest and desperately in need of workers. Wesley Brown's ministry among the students contributed greatly toward the spiritual growth of the student body.

* * *

Boko—Each one of the six outposts has been visited during the year, as well as many villages. We have only one pastor and a small group of teachers scattered over the large territory. There are numerous villages asking for teachers, and in order to meet the needs of some of them we have sent out the large boys from our fourth class to teach three weeks a month, coming in for classes the remaining week. Six earnest young men have been baptized during the year, a small beginning, but during the months since their baptism we find the promise in their lives of an influence which should do much to build the church of Christ among the Bayaka.

We have an enrollment in the station boarding school of 60 boys, and an additional 20 children in the day school. The boys are earnest and faithful and have made marked spiritual growth. Many are enthusiastic personal workers.

A year ago no one could drive a nail or handle a saw, so we feel that progress has been made in manual work. Five school boys have learned to make cement blocks of good quality; two have learned to saw and plane boards, two are learning mason work, three have been taught to sew. When, in addition to our happy group of boys, the regional schools come to Boko, traveling by truck, singing and marching, Bayaka land is well awake to the fact that something new is happening.

Because of the necessity of housing our employes immediately, a number of temporary buildings have been built, but we are putting forth every effort possible for the building of only permanent buildings and we have completed one unit of the administration building which is about to be occupied as a dispensary. One personnel house will soon be completed and the foundations of two more have been started.

It is a privilege to work among the Bayaka, and a terrific experience to come face to face with such depths of heathenism. There

is nothing we know that can impress us more than to see the saving power of Christ working effectively among them. We need experienced men not only those who can do the work, but those who have the depth of character and consecration to build up a new mission station.

"Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom; and with all thy getting get understanding." PROVERBS 4:7

EXTRACTS FROM REPORTS OF THE MEDICAL WORK IN CONGO

The Medical work on all of our seven stations is similar in that there is a crying need from the hearts of the sick and suffering. Only as their bodies are healed can we hope to have them learn to know the Great Physician and hear him say, "Be thou whole, go and sin no more."

Moanza—The maternity department continues to minister to mothers and babies. The hospital wards have been full most of the time and at times we have had difficulty in finding room for all. In two baby clinics we have 730 babies. Dr. Osterholm has visited us twice since the beginning of the year and performed 67 operations.

In every department of the work we have tried to give a consistent witness to all who come. Often we have been discouraged at the seeming lack of response to the message of life and hope, but at other times, and that when least expected, we have been heartened by the working of the Spirit.

* * *

Vanga—Since Dr. Osterholm's return from furlough in August of last year considerable building and repairing has been done. Four

temporary nurses' houses and one permanent house is under construction, and the new Maternity unit is nearing completion, the ward of which has been in use for many months. Our maternity work is increasing, and as usual we have had a full schedule of surgical cases coming from near and far. White patients this year have been unusually numerous and this has demanded considerable of the doctor's and nurse's time but we hope this has helped increase our Christian witness and outreach.

* * *

Kikongo—In spite of the fact that the rain pours in on the patients from above and the floods run in from below the people still continue to come to our Kikongo Hospital. We have been able to help many mothers and babies who because of illness have been abandoned by their families. They come with bodies covered with sores, very anemic and scarcely able to get around. After some months of treatment they start to improve and are usually grateful that they have had patience to continue their treatment until they "become people." Witchcraft still has a strong hold on our people. One woman who was in the hospital with a tiny child, both ill, was asked where her husband was, because he never came to see her. She said, "He is over on the other side of the river; he fled from the village because the people accused him of witchcraft."

Dr. Osterholm has been here for two surgical visits this year. Folk come from long distances when the doctor comes. An old Bamfunika chief brought his wife a two days' journey to have a tumor removed from her face. When they were told that the wound was healed and they were permitted to return to their village their faces were covered with smiles.

In our maternity we have given help to many mothers. Many have been sent home happy with their tiny new baby wrapped in a pretty White Cross blanket. We have also the sad side as do all hospitals. Recently we had a young mother whom we could not deliver. It is at a time like this that we wish for a doctor. Makakala said, "If only a doctor had been here she could have had a Cæsarean and we would have saved the mother and baby." (But he

was not there. He is stationed 250 miles away at the Vanga hospital.)

Our Baby Clinics continue to play an interesting part in our medical program. Many little lives are saved because of the treatment they receive and because a diagnosis is made and the child brought with us to the hospital. Without this help many mothers, babies and other folk would die or suffer in their village without medical care. So we plod along working and sowing the seed as we go, hoping and praying that it may find fertile soil.

* * *

Banza Manteke— Considerable progress is noted in the medical work at Banza Manteke since the coming of a resident doctor. In-patients have increased considerably, and at the Leper camp we now have 160 patients to care for. Our six dispensaries have been visited bi-monthly and one monthly. Native nurses are in charge of these under the supervision of the mission doctor. We also have eight Baby Clinics in the Banza Manteke district with large enrollments at each.

Dormitories for the nurses have been completed and also our maternity ward. Mothers are coming more and more for confinement and it is a pleasure to put them in the new building.

* * *

Sona Bata—Our out-patients and in-patient departments are always crowded to overflowing. The operating lists are so long that patients often have to wait two months before being operated on in spite of regular operating schedules. Over one thousand operations have been performed this calendar year. The obstetrical work has also continued to grow. The new Maternity Ward opened last year has been constantly in use. Regular services have been held each morning for the patients in all departments.

The work has gone ahead at the Leper Camp and the patients have been regularly cared for. Treatment has been continued with the new drugs which gave promising results last year. The services each Sunday morning are a real inspiration and uplift to the people. There were five baptisms at the Leper Camp at the

end of the year.

We plan to occupy the new operating room in July. The second-hand sterilizers which were purchased from the army have been repaired and installed.

The very large number of patients treated by the nurses in our rural dispensaries is a testimony to the value of this district work in bringing help and relief to the rural population who could not otherwise be treated.

* * *

Boko—Because medical work is a new experience for us, our contact with the tragic need has made a tremendous impression on us. Miss Wiseman spent five weeks with us organizing the work of the dispensary with the *aide-infirmier* sent from Banza Manteke. He now has more than full-time work. Though most of the Bayaka are still not medically conscious and live and die with no thought of foreign medical aid, still they have come in large numbers to our dispensary, which to them is a great testimony to our work and to the love of our Saviour.

We put up a tent as a temporary ward, but were soon forced to build an eight-bed temporary dispensary. Our clinic has 45 enrolled and new names added each week. We have definitely wished not to take the responsibility for orphans for the present, but already necessity has brought several to us, and it has meant either to take care of them or to turn them out to die.

* * *

City of *Léopoldville*—The dispensary in charge of a graduate-lady nurse serves a great need in our church and school family. We think of the school boy who broke his arm at noon and before we could get there the nurse had his arm in splints until he could be taken to the hospital. About 9 o'clock one night we were called, the nurse's own baby had pneumonia. We gave her penicillin and she gave her own little tot a shot then and again in the morning. She recovered quickly because of prompt treatment.

A baby clinic is well organized and 190 babies enrolled with 130-148 in attendance each Wednesday. Those who are found

sick are brought daily for treatment and care.

* * *

1. There is no doctor at Moanza.
2. There is no doctor at Kikongo
3. There is no doctor nor nurse at Boko

After prayerful reading of the above, who will say, "Here am I, send Me ?"

GLEANINGS FROM WOMEN'S WORK IN CONGO

Moanza—Women are becoming more prominent in our Congo life; work among women is therefore becoming of more importance. Of our 52 girls in the Boarding school 6 are Central School girls ranking as high as any boy in her class. Three wives of our Kimpese pastors have classes each afternoon for girls at their various posts, one group of about 35 girls. Besides the three Rs, classes in sewing, pottery, singing and Bible memory work are held. Our women who have had the opportunity of some education are becoming real helpmates to their husbands and as a result more Christian families are established.

Vanga—Our hearts rejoice when we see the advance in self-confidence, training, initiative and vision on the part of our Vanga women. More and more of our posts have girls' regional schools. Several pastors have come for White Cross materials to begin sewing classes for the girls. When asked who will teach them they always answer, "Oh, mama," meaning their wives, or the monitors' wives who have been Central School girls in the past. Some of the girls who graduated from the first year of Central School have come to tell us that they are teaching side by side with their husbands. This note of leadership has been seen in our church work. The women not only are represented in our big Regional Gatherings, but are beginning to express their opinions more and more. For the first time we have four women workers on our hospital staff. Two of them have had some training at

the Sona Bata Medical School, one is a trained Midwife. Seven women are teachers in the morning handwork classes of the Girls' school on the station. Mama Amayah is in full charge of all six classes of sewing, pottery, cooking, knitting, crocheting and embroidering.

Banza Manteke—The women's group has continued the work in Personal Evangelism in the hospital, at the Leper camp, as well as in the villages. They met once a week last year and made gauze sponges for the hospital when the supply ran low. They too took charge of the World Day of Prayer program on the station. Christian family life has been emphasized this year not only in the station school but in the villages, to all of which were sent copies of Mrs. Engwall's booklet on the subject. We have over 230 girls in our school this year. We are urging the girls to continue in the *Ecole Ménagère* (Domestic Science School), which was started this year, after they have completed their fifth year in the primary school. The high point of the year for the girls came when over forty girls were baptized in the beautiful service held around the girls' spring.

When our new Maternity building was opened in June the government administrator was present and presented eleven bronze service medals to our workers who had given at least fifteen years of distinguished service to the mission. One of these was given to Lena Tusamo, who is the first woman to whom the administrator had given a medal. Five girls and two women have entered the school for nurses that was opened last October.

Léopoldville—Three women are doing regular city visitation on a part-time basis. One teaches half a day, visits half a day, and the other two give part time each week. The women have their own meeting on Tuesday afternoons and Wednesday afternoon there are seeker's classes, for those who want to join the church but need help and instruction in the Christian way of life. This year in their Thursday sewing class the women have sewed and tied quilts for themselves and they have also tied three quilts for three old widows in the church.

Kimpese—Ninety-two women were enrolled at the beginning

of the session and five classes were formed. Ten women were awarded certificates as apprentice teachers, having completed a one-year course. Women may now be entered for the *moniteurs'* course on the same basis as men. Nine women conducted morning prayers during the year and women from each class took active part in the special service arranged on the Women's World Day of Prayer. Women from the two upper classes regularly took part in conducting the Sunday afternoon Women's meeting. One woman represented the women on the Student Council and two women served on the diaconate of the E.P.I. church.

The first women's meeting each year is a welcome meeting with a few words from each new woman. The last of the year is a farewell with leaving women taking part. It is heartening to note the difference in poise and ability between those women just entering and those leaving.

Kikongo—Real progress has been made in handwork. Pretty patchwork quilts have been made for their children. One woman who is very faithful in her hospital work never misses an opportunity to witness for her master, and she is very faithful in Sunday School work. At present the men are wanting the women to have training and are happy to have them take part in our program for them. It is hard for the women and they need your prayers. It is not easy for them to leave all and follow Jesus. Tribal ties and practices are strong and many a Christian is forced to unite in mourning orgies, and even take part in fetish worship. We praise God for masses who are strong enough to withstand heathen customs and step out into a fuller life.

Sona Bata—We have a number of girls now teaching classes of girls at church center schools. The churches are finally becoming convinced that this is the most hopeful way of training the girls in the villages. The number of girls living in dormitories on the station has doubled since last year. It is encouraging to see so many little girls from 7 to 12 years of age coming into the school from more distant parts of our district. We have two monitrices teaching girls this year, one has a teaching certificate from Kimpese.

The boarding school girls and boys spend much time in pre-

paring for Thursday evening prayer meeting and Sunday afternoon services. These meetings are now attracting a considerable number of other station people and even folks from the nearby villages. In December there were two girls' camps held in the district. We feel that this effort is serving to reach many unreached girls.

Boko.—I often wondered what my approach would be to the village women who had never heard the Gospel and who are so ignorant. The Bayaka distrusts another Bayaka; so market became a weekly task. Those of you who know what it is to deal in native "*luku*," basket after basket of it in the hot sun, trying to keep a semblance of order and quiet among a group of rowdy village women, will know that it is necessarily an unpleasant task. It was a very tiring burden—until I began to realize that these same village women were beginning to talk about me as their friend—that this was the very contact for which I was looking—that here, alone, we met on common ground. That realization has glorified the task into an opportunity for Christ. At first we held our little market service before paying to make sure that all the women would attend. We no longer find that necessary. Little by little we see an understanding coming to them, which we know means that light is beginning to filter into their hearts. Best of all, market day has made the road to Boko familiar to them. They are no longer strangers.

The Bakongo women who are at Boko with their husbands have weekly sewing classes for girls of the surrounding villages.

THE OPENING OF THE BANZA MANTEKE MATERNITY BUILDING

ESTHER J. EHNBOM

THE date June 2, 1950 stands out as a red-letter day in our Banza Manteke field for it was on that day that our new maternity building was dedicated. For years we hoped for such a building as it was so greatly needed but we had hardly expected to get one. How happy we were when money came toward the building of one. Not much maternity work had been done because of lack of proper facilities but since the opening of the new building we realize that it is none too large. Women are coming as never before.

The dedication was held during the yearly regional conference so we had quite a few of our missionaries present, messieurs Armstrong, Metzger and Boone, Miss Satterberg, and our Home Secretary Mr. Farnum. Other than the six of us (or rather seven because little Nancy Joy Uhlinger has a large part to play in all of our activities) there were six Belgians, one of these was the representative of Government, Mr. Van Acke. It is quite unusual to have as many as eighteen white folks on the station at one time.

Dr. Freas has been largely responsible for the supervision of the building although it was I who was responsible for the foundation and walls. The workmen wanted to be very sure of a good foundation; so we hope it will stand, as much work and prayer was put in it.

Dr. Freas was in charge of the program, which was in Kikongo and French. Tata Malutama, our faithful pastor led in the Scripture and prayer as well as giving an appropriate message. Our head nurse, Lutete Hezekiah, who has worked in the hospital over thirty years spoke of the maternity work in years gone by when only cases that could not be cared for by the Native midwife came to the mission. The administrator, after an appropriate address, handed me the keys. He expressed his happiness in the completion of the building realizing what it will mean to our women.

It was on this day, too, that several of our Natives were honored by the government with medals for long years of faithful service. There were ten men and one woman. She was our faithful and loyal Mama Lena Tusamo who has worked with me for years. She has the distinct honor of being the first woman to be decorated by the administrator. Needless to say we were happy and proud.

Our prayers are that God will abundantly bless all who work with the women. We pray that all who come will be richly blessed and go back to their villages with their little treasures. We also pray that the Mothers will live exemplary Christian lives so that their little ones will come to know Christ as their Saviour.

" I CAME, I SAW, I HAVE BEEN CONQUERED !"

DORIS WISEMAN

TO many of us the high point of our Conference this year was Mr. Farnum's masterly summary of his visit to our Congo field, and of the impressions which he carries back with him to America. The gist of all he said was well summed up in his opening sentence, " 'I came, I saw, I have been conquered !'—"Conquered with love and compassion."

As we sat in our missionary fellowship day after day and listened to reports of the almost limitless opportunities which lie ahead of us in the coming years, yet of the heartbreaking obstacles that to man seem insurmountable, of the knotty problems of Native training and preparation for fuller leadership, and looming over all, the dark cloud of the utter insufficiency of missionary personnel, we too felt like crying out, but in fear, "We came, we saw, we have been conquered !" But we didn't ! We didn't because there was Something else which conquered us even more; there was the slow realization which grew upon us day by day that there was Power sufficient for us to grasp our opportunities, there was Wisdom for the solving of our problems, the overcoming of

our difficulties, and that there was Faith that we might look to God for the supplying of our personnel needs, both missionary and Native. I doubt if any of us know quite when it happened, perhaps it was not at any one moment, but slowly, gradually. One thing we know. Back at our tasks it seems quite clear to us that Christ came to our Conference, He saw our needs and our insufficiency, and He conquered our fears and sent us back with new faith and courage that, come what may, He is able !

The joy of Conference is not only the inspiration which one receives, but also the everyday fellowship with those for whom we pray, with whom we labor, but whom we seldom see from one Conference to the next. I doubt if one could find a lovelier fellowship than ours. Our "missionary family" comes in time to be truly just that, a fellowship of those who are facing the years together, who share joys and sorrows, who know each other's faults well as their good points, but who love and are loyal to one another like any other family group. It means a lot to get together once a year.

Perhaps the thing I look forward to most of all, and I doubt that I am alone in this, is losing sight of the little problems and difficulties in the larger deeper flow of our sharing of problems, and the gaining of a new and greater vision of the calling which is ours in Christ Jesus. Conference never fails us in this ! We always return refreshed.

My twin says, "This is the nicest Conference I have ever attended !"__, But then, we are always saying that.

"*Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.*" PROVERBS 4:5

"*The Lord give thee understanding in all things.*" 2 TIMOTHY 2:7

"OUR" PRAYER DAY

MARGUERITE ELDREDGE

A procession of women carrying baskets of food for the weekly market, totalling half a ton of cassava, rhythmically filed down the hill. In response to a suggestion that they leave the baskets at the store for weighing later, and come at once to the church the women shouted in chorus : "We know, is it not OUR prayer day ? Truly we have come for just that reason." Soon they were pushing through doorways to squeeze into the already crowded church.

Torrential rains during the night, heavy skies and intermittent showers during the morning did not dampen the ardor of Moanza women, their families and friends as on February 24th, 1950 they assembled for their special day of prayer and praise in spiritual fellowship with Christian women of all the world. A globe before the open Bible silently witnessed to the bigness of God's world and His message of love and salvation for each soul in every land.

Malata Nsungi, senior deaconess, assisted by two young women Malia and Olupa read Scripture portions and directed thoughts in meditation. All were grateful for the Kikongo translation enabling each literate woman to hold and follow her own program. Many participated in prayer. The reverent, expectant attitude of even the little children present gave the feeling that we were really on holy ground, the Lord preciously near to hear and answer prayer and to add His blessing.

Voiced were petitions such as these : Unite us in Thee, Father God, and to one another in our homes, in our work, in our church and in our village life, and make us one with the world-family of God's children. Strengthen and steady our hearts as rock. Give us the mind of Christ that we may think Thy thoughts, then shall we truly draw water out of Thy wells of salvation. Help us to help the sick, the hungry, the children who have no parents, those who are orphans because they know not their Father God. We sin—cleanse us. We praise and pray in Thy name, Saviour. Amen.

Fourteen World Day of Prayer services were held in the Inzia River valley area for which the American Baptist mission station of Moanza is responsible. Audiences ranged from 92 to 700, with a total of 3872 attending; and offerings amounting to francs 783.35 were received on behalf of work among the Bayaka folk living on the west side of the Inzia river. In the past four years this work has extended from 11 to 32 villages, and in due season it is hoped that there may be an unbroken Christian work and witness extending to the recently established mission station at Boko.

A MONUMENT TO CHRISTIAN MISSIONS

JOHN E. GEIL

RELIGIOUS forces today are facing a time of testing and of crisis. Christianity is on trial and must prove its worth. Missionaries and those who represent it are on trial and must prove their worth. It is not only the superstructures which are being tried but the foundations as well. At a time like this professed followers of Jesus Christ should go over in a searching way their methods, aims, message and spirit. Christian people who have vested interests in church and mission work should take stock and try and determine for themselves just what has been realized from their investments of time, prayer, energy, money and life.

In order properly to appraise and evaluate mission work on the Congo we need to remember that it is only seventy years since the pioneers of the Cross at the call of God and peril of their lives entered Congoland. In so doing they overleapt what some regarded as "barriers of nature" and became guilty in the minds of some wise and good people of "criminal recklessness." They entered an unknown country, a rough, rugged, jungle country, without roads, bridges, beasts of burden, food, clothing, medicines or anything suited to the needs of the white man a country with a debilitating and deadly climate. They went to a people

who were ignorant, superstitious and degraded and were practicing such cruel and bloody rites as cannibalism, witchcraft, human sacrifice, burial alive, and poison ordeals and were at the same time speaking a strange language, no syllable of which had been reduced to writing. In the light of these facts it is easy to see how years of physical toil and endurance had to precede the ingathering of results.

Despite all of this and more which might be mentioned, only seven years elapsed before there was a spiritual awakening known as "The Pentecost of the Congo." Out of this a church was born with a passion for souls and a passion for service. By the hundreds Natives testified to their acceptance of the Gospel message by breaking away from their old superstitious beliefs and practices; witchcraft and witch doctors were renounced; taboos were broken and stacks of fetishes which had been feared and revered and worshipped for generations were brought to the station and publicly burned. Opposition and persecution which followed simply stimulated and promoted the movement. Without pay and sometimes at the peril of their lives the early converts went forth witnessing for Christ. They also evidenced their earnestness and sincerity by carrying voluntarily on their heads and shoulders, a distance of fifty miles through tall jungle grass, and over narrow crooked paths, all the material for a church building large enough to seat seven hundred people. The Native church had had a day of special prayer for a church building and the building had come as they believed in direct answer to their prayer.

Despite difficulties and dangers which had to be met and overcome, the church from the beginning increased in numbers and strength. During the reaction which followed the initial revival, which was in the nature of a mass movement, there was a falling away of some who sought through the church temporal and material advantages, and possibly a heavenly home, but the rank and file remained true and faithful until death, and, happy in a Saviour's love, passed into the great beyond. Those who remain give every promise of being true and faithful unto the end.

From the beginning honest attempts have been made to put upon the Native Christians responsibilities consistent with their

spiritual attainment and power and thus conserve for Christ and his church the services which they alone can render. To a large extent the work is self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating. The giving of Native Christians just a little removed from heathendom, if considered in the light of their income and possessions, is far in advance of that of the most generous givers in this favored land. Willingly and gladly in recent years the Natives have taken upon themselves big responsibilities and heavy burdens in order that people in the homeland might help them to help themselves by doing for them the things which need to be done and which they themselves cannot do. In this connection they have sometimes been disappointed and grieved when reasonable expectations and hopes have not been realized and when promises made by the Missions and Boards have not been kept. In spite of this teachers and preachers have been content to go on with their work and accept such support as the Native church could or would give. Practically all Native workers who have been dependent on Native churches for their support have been underpaid. Most of them have received mere pittances and some have received no pay at all and have had to work with their own hands in order that they themselves and their families might have the necessities of life.

Apart from the abiding presence of the spirit of God the first great need of the Christian church in Congo is for Native leaders who are trained and capable, consecrated and thoroughly Christian and who will be examples of right forms of Christian living, and be able to apply Christianity to all phases and departments of Native life. Such leaders will be able to raise up to themselves an intelligent, well-to-do, strong body of men and women who as laymen will constitute the backbone of the church and share in the bearing of its burdens, in the carrying on of its work and in the fulfilling of its task. In Congo the church is of necessity made up of immature Christians of the second or third generation who have had little in the way of instruction and help, little opportunity of growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. These are therefore poorly prepared for the reception and appropriation of the Gospel with its exacting and

revolutionizing demands. The masses remain unsaved and many in the church are grovelling in the dark in the midst of snares, delusions and pitfalls. False prophets are springing up in the name of the Lord and are leading many astray. Consequently there is a tremendous need for men and women who can and will teach and preach, and above all things else live the Gospel and carry on the work of the church in its entirety. Success in mission work today is determined by the extent to which competent Native workers are being found, trained, and put to work for the Master.

In the Belgian Congo where the work was begun over seventy years ago amongst a primitive and animistic people, who were declared by some to be hopeless, there are now evangelists and teachers and Christian workers of ability and power who are filling large places and carrying big responsibilities. The fact that most of the church work is directed, controlled and supported by the Natives themselves would indicate this. They also have a large part in carrying on school and medical work. In my work with, as well as for, Natives during my last term I served in an advisory capacity to Native leaders who were entrusted with the direction and management of the work of the station and field. Time would fail me if I should try to tell of Lukoki, Wamba, Malutama, Mafiote, Vingadio, Luvengika, Mabundamene, Lubikulu, Tonduanga, and many others whom I might name and of the place and part which they have had, and are having, in the work of the church and Kingdom. Without such as these, missionaries with the shortages of staffs and funds could not in recent years have carried on.

The true story of Congo Mission work is on the whole a story of unmet needs, neglected opportunities, and unfulfilled obligations. We began our work in 1884 by taking over the work of an interdenominational mission which was known as the Livingstone Inland Mission. We took it over with one stipulation that the work which had been so wonderfully blest of God should not be allowed to lapse but should be vigorously prosecuted. In six years the Livingstone Inland Mission had seven well-established stations with twenty-three missionaries on those stations and three on furlough—twenty-six in all out of fifty who had gone

forth, ten of whom had died and fourteen of whom had been obliged to give up the work for health reasons. After sixty-four years of service under more favorable circumstances we are still reporting the same number of stations. From the beginning there was a lack of interest and support which led soon to a policy of restriction and retrenchment and at one time to the serious consideration of the abandonment of the entire work. In pursuance of this policy Bolenge, Mukimvika, Matadi, Tshumbiri and Ntondo have been given up, or transferred to other societies, after fundamental foundation work had been done at the expense of money and of life.

However, when we consider the short time and few workers and difficulties which had to be met and overcome we must realize that the Congo Mission is a marvel and monument to Christian Missions. Miracles of redemption unsurpassed have been performed by the Christ in Congo on rudest barbarians, and ignorant degraded savages. Thousands of them may now be seen living in accord with the pure and peaceful principles of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. They are the salt and the leaven, — a preserving and transforming power. Soldier boys who had little or no interest in church and mission work while at home became greatly interested as they saw the effects of mission work in the Congo and were moved to give to its support and some even expressed desires to be missionaries.

The Congo Mission has been one of the most fruitful mission fields of our society and the returns have been great for the investments made.

In 1934 Dr. John R. Mott visited Africa and the Congo for the first time. Dr. Mott has traveled over the world in the interests of Christian work and knows mission work and mission fields as no other man knows them. He held three conferences in the Congo, the last of which was held in Léopoldville. In concluding these conferences he said; "In all my travels I have never seen so rich a fruitage from so meager a sowing. I see no limit to the possibilities of this great continent." Why so meager a sowing? What returns would we as Christian people have had if we had aroused ourselves to actual and desperate needs in home churches and

on mission fields and had given as generously and sacrificially to meeting these needs as we gave to the demands of the war?

We have made a good beginning and laid foundations at the expense of money and of life. We have seen manifest signs of God's presence and blessing in our work. Shall we continue to do our bit with scrupulous fidelity to the mite boxes or shall we strengthen our work and as soon and fast as possible move forward all along the line? It is a great thing to begin an important work for God but the responsibility for its continuance and completion is greater. Increasing demands must be met by enlarged gifts. Shall we not adopt a new standard of sacrifice and of service and unitedly engage in an aggressive spiritual warfare that the Church in Congo and everywhere may be victorious in the day of its opportunity?

NSWESWE ANSUSU AMPEMBE REAPPEARS

GEORGE W. CARPENTER

While the middle-sized press at LECO is running off this number of the *Congo News Letter* its big brother along side will be busily batting out a new edition of *Nsweswe Ansusu Ampembe*, (The Little White Hen), a book of stories for children.

The reprinting of this book brings back many memories, for when I reached Kimpese in July 1926 I found Dr. Mabie and Timotio Vingadio just starting the first pages of it. Dr. Mabie had invested $400 of her own savings in a second-hand press and a little type; and this school reader was one of the first books attempted. There were no cuts available to illustrate it, but both Dr. Mabie and Timotio were convinced that books for small children should be full of pictures to make the text more interesting and meaningful. They were proposing to leave blank spaces in the pages and then run them all through a duplicator to add some pictures.

I remember suggesting that it could do no harm to try our hand at wood-cuts—we might possibly succeed in getting some

passable pictures that way. We had the men in the carpenter shop plane some boards as smooth and level as possible and the same thickness as a page of type. We traced our pictures onto the wood with carbon paper and set to work with jack-knives to carve the picture in relief. It was a tedious task to make even one picture, but the result surpassed our expectations and we decided the effort was well worth while.

The Little White Hen in person.

By experiment we found a more suitable kind of wood, and Mr. Moon's helper, Jesse Fuka, soon developed considerable skill in cutting the blocks. At that time I knew no Kikongo, and so had no idea as to the quality or usefulness of the text. Now, in reviewing it for reprinting, I realize that the stories are extraordinarily vivid, and told in a Kikongo that is unsurpassed.

We are glad that the central press at LECO is making it possible gradually to overtake our needs for books, though so far we have only begun. One of the problems is the financing of production; for while each edition will sell out fairly rapidly it represents an investment of at least a thousand dollars, and often several thousand, at the time of printing; and scores of books are needed. This means a total investment far in excess of any funds which the Mission has as yet been able to allocate to literature production. So we can only go forward one step at time, trusting that God will provide for the next step as we go.

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